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new memo issued on 25 Sep '57

Chief, Geography Division

9 September 1957

THRU : Assistant Director for Research and Reports
Chief, Geographic Research

Review of CIA/RR-G-18, Novaya Zemlya

1. The role of Novaya Zemlya in the strategy of the U.S.S.R. is the theme to be unfolded by a presentation and analysis of data. As the report points out, there are various kinds of activities taking place on the islands -- some more significant than others in indicating the extent of Soviet utilization of the island facilities in a strategic role. A clear-cut answer to this is hidden in a number of probabilities -- or rather, uncertainties -- about the very existence or use of air, communications, early warning, and other installations.

2. The report does not give a sufficient analysis of the islands' possible strategic use and the conditions imposed by the geographic factors inherent in the islands' location and as related to the probable existence of certain key types of activities. In order to arrive at some appreciation of the possible current role, it might be well to analyze the full role Novaya Zemlya could perform, based on its location, with regard to strategic factors only and without regard to the impracticality of such a role because of factors such as temperatures, cloud cover, winds, fog, ice, etc. The total possible unimpeded role could then be whittled down to a reasonable size, based upon the application of all factors which tend to restrict the fullest strategic use of the islands.

3. The addition and replacement I am suggesting is as complete an analysis as possible of the role Novaya Zemlya can play in the over-all Soviet strategy based upon a consideration of all pertinent factors. This analysis could be the introduction to the report and thereby fill the gap left by its present organization and coverage.

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Enclosures: 2

1. Memo to AD/RR from Chief, D/CG, subject: Evaluation of CIA/RR-G-18, Novaya Zemlya, dated 27 August 1957
2. Multilith of CIA/RR-G-18, Novaya Zemlya

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